



## Special Use Permit - First Amendment Activities

Freedom of speech, press, religion, and assembly are rights protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. People may exercise these rights in national parks, but the National Park Service (NPS) still retains its responsibility to protect park resources and prevent conflict among park visitors. Therefore, the NPS establishes guidelines for setting the time, place and manner (number of participants, use of facilities and type of equipment) for the events to occur.

By law, the NPS has established places in parks where First Amendment activities can be accommodated. These areas are visible to the general visiting public without interfering with the public's enjoyment of the park.

Special Use Permits are issued for First Amendment activities, but there are no fees or costs and no insurance is required for the activities. All requests for similar activities are treated equally. As long as permit criteria and requirements are met, no group wishing to assemble lawfully will be discriminated against or denied the right of assembly.

### Permit Application Procedure

**Please submit your application at least 5 business days before the start of the proposed activity.**

Requests for a permit application may be made in person at park headquarters, via telephone, email or letter. The application form may be downloaded from the park website. Park contact information is:

Special Park Use Coordinator  
Buffalo National River  
402 N. Walnut St., Suite 136  
Harrison, AR 72601

Telephone: 870-365-2702  
FAX: 870-365-2799  
Website: [www.nps.gov/buff/](http://www.nps.gov/buff/)  
Email: [buff\\_information@nps.gov](mailto:buff_information@nps.gov)

### Types of First Amendment Activities

- Religious services or ceremonies
- Press conference
- Voter registration
- Collecting signatures on petitions or voter initiatives
- Public demonstration, picketing, assembly or rally for expressing opinion and views
- Sale or distribution of printed material related to free expression of opinion

### Type of Activities that are NOT covered by the First Amendment

- Church picnic or social gathering
- Wedding ceremonies or receptions
- Political fund raiser or other invitation-only political activity or event
- Solicitation of donations
- Community parades, athletics, or sporting events
- Scattering of cremated human remains ("cremains")

Many **non**-First Amendment activities can be accommodated through the Special Use Permit system for which a fee may be charged. Liability insurance may be required. Refer to the **Special Use Permit** link on the park website for additional information.

## **Permit**

**Please submit your application at least 5 business days before the start of the proposed activity.** Once an application has been received and processed, a Special Use Permit will be prepared and mailed to you for signature. Upon receipt, please review, sign and return the permit to our office for the Superintendent's signature. After the Superintendent signs the permit, a signed copy of the permit will be forwarded to you. *The approved, signed permit copy must be in your possession at the time of the activity.*

**Terms & Conditions** To maintain park natural and cultural resources and quality visitor experiences the following criteria apply to Special Use Permits for First Amendment activities:

1. The activity must not conflict with any scheduled NPS function or program.
2. First Amendment activities will be conducted in designated areas as specified in the Buffalo National River Superintendent's Compendium.
3. Permits are issued for no longer than a seven (7) day period. A permit is renewable for like periods upon completion of another application, and provided no other application has been received and no prevailing park use has been identified for the area requested.
4. The NPS reserves the right to immediately revoke the permit at any time should this become necessary in the interest of public safety, public health and general welfare.
5. The person or group will comply with any instructions from a designated official representative from Buffalo National River.
6. The area used by the permittee will be left in the same condition as found and all litter placed in trash receptacles. Any NPS property damaged by, or as a result of the permittee, will be replaced or repaired at the cost of the permittee.
7. No items may be attached to NPS property (fences, trees, trash receptacles, etc.). Banners and signs which are hand carried are allowed and must not pose a danger to anyone else in the area.
8. Electrical power will not be furnished nor will generators be allowed.
9. Any portable public address system being used will be so adjusted as to accommodate only those people in the immediate area.
10. Participants are to avoid language which implies any official connections to the NPS and its activities.
11. Good order and proper decorum shall be maintained by the person or persons conducting and participating in the event and the person or persons will leave the area at the conclusion time stated on the permit. It is prohibited for anyone engaged in activities covered under the permit to obstruct or impede pedestrians or vehicles, or harass park visitor or misrepresent their purposes. Permittee agrees to maintain public access in the area.
12. Failure to comply with the provisions of the permit will result in its immediate revocation.

***Other stipulations may be added depending on the specific nature of your request***